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ABSTRACT

This study explores and documents the inclusion of American women literary authors in recommended lists that have been used by academic librarians as a main tool for collection development and evaluation. These lists have been the well-known standards used as guides for building a core collection in support of the college curricula. A sample of 40 women authors was selected from "The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Tradition in English," which is considered an important canon in the field of women's studies and women's literature. An additional 60 women authors selected from "American Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide from Colonial Times to the Present" were added to the sample. The study documents and evaluates the inclusion of the 100 American women literary authors in Charles B. Shaw's "A List of Books for College Libraries (1930) and its supplement published in 1940. In addition, the study documents and evaluates women's inclusion in the three editions of "Books for College Libraries" (BCL) that were intended to update Shaw's list. The three editions were published in 1967, 1975, and 1988. All are considered highly respected core bibliographies for undergraduate libraries. The timeframe chosen for publication by the American women authors is between 1620 and 1929. This enabled the study to begin by documenting their inclusion in Shaw's list. Results show that there is a tendency to exclude women from the literary canon. The inclusion of women of color was almost nonexistent until BCL3 in 1988. Even though the inclusion of women has increased steadily since the publication of Shaw and its supplement, the adequacy of BCL3 in representing works by American women literary authors is questionable. (Contains 32 references.) (Author/AEF)

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INCLUSION OF AMERICAN WOMEN LITERARY AUTHORS IN SHAW'S *A LIST OF BOOKS FOR COLLEGE LIBRARIES* AND THE THREE EDITIONS OF *BOOKS FOR COLLEGE LIBRARIES*

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Library Science

by

Bonnie Herrage

November, 1996

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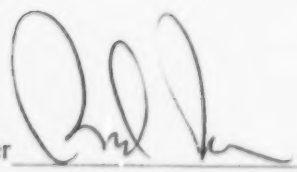
Adviser  Date 11-14-96

Abstract

This study explores and documents the inclusion of American women literary authors in recommended lists that have been used by academic librarians as a main tool for collection development and evaluation. These lists have been the well-known standards used as guides for building a core collection in support of the college curricula.

A sample of 40 women authors were selected from *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Tradition in English,* which is considered an important canon in the field of women's studies and women's literature. An additional 60 women authors selected from *American Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide from Colonial Times to the Present* were added to the sample.

This study documents and evaluates the inclusion of the 100 American women literary authors in Charles B. Shaw's *A List of Books for College Libraries* (1930) and it's supplement published in 1940. In addition, the study documents and evaluates women's inclusion in the three editions of *Books for College Libraries* that were intended to update Shaw's list. The three editions were published in 1967, 1975, and 1988. All are considered highly respected core bibliographies for undergraduate libraries. The timeframe chosen for publication by the American women authors is between 1620 and 1929. This enabled the study to begin by documenting their inclusion in Shaw's recommended list.

The study shows that there is a tendency to exclude women from the literary canon. Historically, the situation for women of color is dire. The inclusion of women of color was almost nonexistent until *BCL3* in 1988. Even though the inclusion of women has increased steadily since the publication of Shaw and it's supplement, the adequacy of *BCL3* in representing works by American women literary authors is questionable.

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Introduction

American literature is one area in which women's writings have largely been ignored. Lauter indicates that in the 1920's, American literature courses began to be developed and controlled by a small group of teachers and critics who had similar backgrounds and outlooks (1983). Buell propounds that these scholars helped to develop a literary canon which included works written primarily by white males even though the first producers of work in quantity in American poetry, drama, and fiction were women (1987). Pope credits the reemergence of the women's movement in the 1960's and the increase of female students and faculty on college campuses with providing the impetus for questioning the male-dominated literary canon (1989). The *International Encyclopedia of Communications* states that changes in the literary canon are often triggered by changes in historical circumstances (Barnouw and Schramm 1989). Even though the exclusion of women writers from the canon and their marginal place in literature has been largely challenged in the 1980's, many women authors remain excluded from or in the margins of the literary canon (Aiken 1986).

The *International Encyclopedia of Communications* defines "literary canon" as [t]hose literary works that at any given moment in a CULTURE's history are regarded by educated people as the best their culture has to offer" (Barnouw 1989, p. 442). When the "learned elite" of any given historical period chooses to exclude from the canon any group outside the culture's dominant group they are sending a definite message. The problem for the people who find members of their own race, sex, or ethnic background excluded from the canon is that it means "accepting the idea that people like themselves are or have until now been incapable of producing great art" (p. 443). Scholars who study canon formation do not accept the imputation of racial, sexual, ethnic, or class inferiority. They prefer to assume that "canonization is not a neutral process in which the

best works rise to the top through natural selection" (p. 443) They prefer to view canonization as "a means by which the class of people that exercises power in a society maintains control of the society's systems of value [and] [t]he literary canon...becomes an arena of ideological struggle in which contending visions of the world vie for mastery" (p. 443).

This study examines American women literary authors who published between 1620 and 1929. An historical look at what it was like to be a women writer prior to and during the period in which Shaw's core bibliography was being compiled is important to understanding the issue of exclusion from recommended lists.

Virginia Woolf captures the attitude and the mood of the patriarchal literati toward women writers in her essay *A Room of One's Own*. Virginia Woolf is a British woman writer. This study concentrates on American women writers. However, Woolf's essay is very relevant in that it reveals the disfranchisement experienced by all English speaking women literary authors.

Woolf's essay is based on papers read to the Arts Society at Newnham and the Odtaa at Girton in October 1928. The essay was published in 1929. These dates are significant in that they coincide with the compilation of Charles B. Shaw's *A List of Books for College Libraries* (1930). The attitude of the times is reflected in the bibliography.

A Room of One's Own analyzes the hostile environment in which women write (Rosenman 1995, p. 29). Woolf speaks of patriarchy not only as a social system, but as an ideology. By adopting patriarchy as an ideology, it makes its assumptions appear to be the result of common sense and universal human nature (p. 30). It is a powerful means of sustaining the status quo (30). Men monopolize power on the basis of "some alleged natural right or capacity that women are said to lack" (p. 30).

The women writers of the times confronted this attitude in many places. Women did not have access to higher education until the 19th century. Women still continued to

be denied access to certain colleges and their libraries until the 1920's. Woolf recalls her own feelings of exclusion and inferiority in the Oxford section of *A Room of One's Own*. Suffrage and full educational enfranchisement were gained only in 1928 (Rosenman, p. 32). But the issue of women's abilities continued to be debated (p. 32).

Desmond MacCarthy, a personal friend of Woolf's, gave a favorable review to a book by Arnold Bennett entitled *Our Women*. The book concluded that women were naturally inferior and wished to be dominated by men (Rosenman, p. 32). Even more brazen was MacCarthy's comment in *Life and Letters* in 1928 that claims "female novelists should only aspire to excellence by courageously acknowledging the limitations of their sex" (p. 33). "MacCarthy's glib assertions that women have innate limitations as writers and that they ought to embrace their inferiority...are classic partriarchal assumptions" (p. 33). If women are assumed to be intellectually and literarily inferior, they are likely to be excluded from important bibliographic works.

The exclusion of women among the literati did not subside in the 1930's. During this time the supplement to Shaw was being compiled. E.M. Forster informed Woolf in 1935 that the London Library Committee had refused to accept her for membership because women were "so troublesome" (Rosenman, p. 31). Even though Woolf had published eight novels at the time of her rejection and was considered one of the major literary talents of the period, she found herself excluded from a significant cultural institution because of her gender (p. 31).

In her essay, "Woolf writes of the 'blank spaces' on library bookshelves where women's books should be, seeing not mere accidental absence but exclusion (Woolf, 1929, p. 52). It is the 'books that were not there' that tell the tale of women's literary history (p. 45). Woolf implies here a politics of absence...by defining these empty spaces as having been created by gender inequities. Although there is nothing there, that 'nothing' still has meaning...blank spaces [are] its own kind of historical record" (Rosenman, p. 40).

The study of literary canon reveals the ways certain social groups have been discriminated against. It contends to be "a literary suffrage movement" that is a way for "previously marginalized groups to advance their own interests" (p. 443) The feminist movement and the growth of women's studies appear to have increased the voice of women.

A Ford Foundation workshop on the future of women's studies reports that women's studies reached a secure position in the undergraduate programs at many U.S. Colleges by the late 1980's. This is an achievement from its marginalized position at U.S. colleges in the early 1970's. But Paula Rothenberg notes that the successes realized so far are in "real danger" of being overturned "by the coordinated efforts of conservative thinktanks, foundations, and professional associations" (Hatton 1994, p. 259). For example, the National Association of Scholars identify colleges with curricula transformed to the needs of women as institutions that "need to return to a more traditional curriculum" (p. 259). Conservative foundations closely watch women's studies groups for signs of weakness. Conservative critics claim that the present movement to revise the literary canon is a threat to the "classical" ideal of the humanities curriculum which represents "the best" works of literature (Giroux & Kay 1989). Anderson believes that the current arguments of academic conservatives that students need to "return to basics" are nothing more than attempts to reinstate patriarchal authority (Anderson 1987).

Women must be adequately represented if they are to remain a contender in the arena of literary canon. Substantial inclusion in the recommended lists used most by academic librarians is one way American women literary authors can become visible and remain part of the current canon.

Problem Statement

The problem of this study is to document and examine the inclusion of American women literary authors in the recommended lists that have been used by academic librarians as a main tool for collection development and evaluation during the past 66 years. Emphasis will be on women literary authors whose works fall under the genre of American literature. This narrows the literary works to those included in the English section of the recommended lists. This study will document and evaluate the inclusion of American women literary authors in Charles B. Shaw's *A List of Books for College Libraries* (1930) and its supplement published in 1940. In addition, the study will document and evaluate women's inclusion in the three editions of *Books for College Libraries* that were intended to update Shaw's list. Shaw's 1930 list is published by the Carnegie Corporation. The other four lists are all published by the American Library Association. These lists have been the well-known standards used as guides by academic librarians for building a core collection in support of the college curricula. The timeframe for publication by these American women authors is between 1620 and 1929. This enables the study to begin by documenting inclusion in Shaw's list. The study seeks to determine inclusion based mainly on gender. The issue of color will also be considered.

Hypotheses

The following predictions are based on the above introduction and research problem:

H1 Women have historically been excluded from recommended lists.

H2 Historically, women of color are more likely to be excluded from recommended lists.

H3 There is an increase in the inclusion of American women literary authors with each subsequent edition of recommended lists.

H4 There is a substantial difference in the inclusion of American women literary authors in Shaw's recommended list and the third edition of *Books for College Libraries*.

H5 The third edition of *Books for College Libraries* does not adequately represent works by American women literary authors.

Limitations of the Study

1. The study excludes many women authors who published after the dates 1620-1929.

2. The study excludes many women literary authors who write outside of the genre of American literature and may be included in other sections of the recommended lists.

3. Cross-references for other names used by the women authors was noted. However, pen names and marital status not realized may have an inadvertent effect on the study.

4. Biographies were consulted to determine women of color, however color was not discernible in all of the biographical sketches.

5. Personal evaluation of the biographies makes the selection of authors for the study sample somewhat subjective.

6. The study does not take into consideration homosexuality, bisexuality, or other lifestyle choices that may have been viewed as subversive or unconventional by the societal norms of certain periods and may have contributed to the author's exclusion from the literary canon or decanonization.

Literature Review

The literature indicates that Shaw's *List of Books for College Libraries* was a standard guide for building a core collection when published in 1930. The significance of Shaw's list is demonstrated in J. Periam Danton's 1935 doctoral dissertation. Danton examined certain factors which affected the excellence of book selection in college libraries. Shaw's list was one of the two principal sources upon which Danton based the selection of colleges to be studied. Danton claims that Shaw's list contains "a reliable sample of books for college libraries published from 1900-1930" (18) and the list "has been shown to be a valid relative measure of small college library book collections" (96).

In addition, Danton discusses a library's standing on Shaw's list as a relative measure of the quality of it's book collection. As another one of the principal sources, Danton refers to data on college libraries collected from 1929-1932 by Professor William Randall for the Carnegie Corporation Advisory Group on College Libraries (96). Randall indicates that although a library containing 3,000 books from the list is not necessarily twice as efficient as a library containing 1,500 of them, it is right to say that it is a better library (20). In support of Randall's comment, it was conclusively found, without exception, that the ten libraries which had the largest numbers of books contained in Shaw's list were in institutions cited for excellence among American colleges (20). The ten having fewer listed books were, with one exception, affiliated with colleges without national accreditation and are considered of lower standing among colleges (21). Thus, the connection between the excellence of a college and the excellence of its library is implicated. It is evident that Danton considers Shaw's list to be a reliable guide in measuring the quality of library holdings.

The Carnegie Corporation Advisory Group on College Libraries is the group that caused the *List of Books for College Libraries* to be prepared. This group, during 1929-

1932, recommended to the Carnegie Corporation the giving of grants to college libraries for collection building. (page # not available due to bad microfilm) Because of these connections, it can be insinuated that the Carnegie Corporation is among the learned elite. They control the list and the grant money. It is not indicated whether grants were given to "weaker" libraries to strengthen their collection or to the libraries that already had "strong" collections. But it can be implied that there is a connection between using Shaw's list and receiving grant money. An institution's rank and status seems to also be influenced by the use of the list. Shaw's list was a major core bibliography used by academic librarians during this period.

Information is contained in books, reviews have been written, and studies have been done concerning the use of *Books for College Libraries* (*BCL*) for collection development in academic libraries. Mary Kathleen Simon conducted a study related to integrating literature by women into college and university American literature courses. Lynn Silipigni Connaway and Maureen J. Delaney-Lehman seem to be the only researchers who have done studies which include both the use of *Books for College Libraries* and inclusion of women.

Three editions of *Books for College Libraries* have been published since 1967. Lynn Silipigni Connaway states that *BCL1* was intended to update Charles B. Shaw's *List of Books for College Libraries* (1995). *BCL1* was published in 1967, *BCL2* in 1975, and *BCL3* in 1988.

The list of approximately 53,400 titles contained in *BCL1* is based on the initial selection made for the University of California's New Campuses program. This program involved the simultaneous development of basic undergraduate libraries of 75,000 volumes each for the new San Diego, Irvine, and Santa Cruz campuses. The selections were made with the assistance of college teachers, librarians, and other advisors. It is assumed that these people were among the "learned elite" of the period. It is safe to assume, given the time period, that the vast majority of the those on the selection

committee were still male. Librarianship was primarily a female occupation. Until the 1960's the librarian's function in academic libraries was the prevention of duplicates, which is primarily clerical. The professors, who were predominantly male, did most of the book selection. The civil rights of women, including having the same opportunity as men to hold any kind of job or office, were just beginning to be addressed during the 1960's (Newhouse 1992, p. 311). Therefore, men probably still controlled the literary canon of this time period. But female librarians were beginning to have a stronger voice. The preface to *BCL1* states that "[t]his list does not claim to be a list of the best books or a basic list for any college library...[it] is a list of monographs designed to support a college teaching program that depends heavily upon the library, and to supply the necessary materials for term papers and suggested and independent outside reading" (Voight and Treyz 1967, p.v). *BCL2* and *BCL3* state similar objectives. Therefore, it can be ascertained that the entries chosen for inclusion in *Books for College Libraries* are directly related to the college curricula.

The number of entries in *BCL2* was reduced to 38,651 from the list of 53,400 titles in *BCL1*. The introduction of *BCL2* states that it is intended for use by undergraduate libraries and the reduced number of titles reflects a minimal "core collection." It further states that the list makes up the "bare minimum of titles needed to support an average college instructional program of good quality" (Introduction to *Books for College Libraries* 1975, p. vii). *BCL3* includes 50,000 titles and states that it "presents a third recommended core collection for undergraduate libraries" (Clark 1988).

All three editions of *Books for College Libraries* have been subject to criticism. In two separate studies, Lee Ash and Robert Wadsworth criticized *BCL1* for the fact that 40% the titles included in the list were out of print before the edition was published (Ash 1967, Wadsworth 1967). *BCL2* is criticized by Lee Ash and R. Moore for including out-of-print titles when available titles are not listed in the edition (Ash 1976, Moore 1976). Ash and Moore also questioned the qualifications of those responsible for selection

(1976). *BCL2* was also criticized for its unbalanced and uneven selections as well as for omitting important works (Gaughan 1976, Moore 1976).

John M. Budd conducted a study in 1991 concerning the utility of a recommended core list. A core list such as *BCL3* "is presumed to have usefulness as a collection development and evaluation tool" (p. 140) Budd examined *BCL3* in light of actual ownership and in-print status. Out of a stratified sample of 381 titles, Budd found that about 43% were out of print approximately one year after the publication of *BCL3*. In summary, he recommends a cautionary attitude in using *BCL3* to assess academic library collections (Budd 1991). In light of the criticism that the core lists are unbalanced, have uneven selections, and omit important works, it can be assumed that many works by American women literary authors would be ignored and excluded.

In spite of the criticism, *Books for College Libraries* is still highly recommended and used as a tool for collection development and evaluation. William A. Katz refers to *Books for College Libraries* as "[t]he basic list for four-year liberal arts colleges" (Katz 1980). Although he cautions against it, he indicates that some librarians purchase almost blindly from the *BCL* core list (p. 150). Nonetheless, inclusion in the *BCL* increases the chance that an author will be selected for purchase and added to the library's collection. Also, an author's inclusion in *BCL* may also increase the possibility of being incorporated into the college curricula is increased.

Katz also recommends *BCL* as an aid in weeding a collection. He states that material should be retained if it is listed in a standard current core bibliography, such as *Books for College Libraries* (p. 77). Katz does also caution against following the lists blindly in this capacity. However, this implies that if an American women literary author is not included in the current recommended list, her works are in danger of being deselected from the collection and not being taught in the classroom. This is known as decanonization and it concerns the rise and fall of authors within the literary canon.

Willa Cather and Harriet Beecher Stowe have both been victims of decanonization. Willa Cather was a major writer in the 1920's thanks to support by journalists and men of letters (O'Brien 1989). O'Brien attributes her decanonization in the 1930's and 1940's to the shifting nature of the literary canon brought about by literature teachers, book reviewers, and authors of literary history (1989). Willa Cather has been recanonized and is currently being taught in college classrooms in the United States.

Uncle Tom's Cabin saw a rise, fall, and subsequent rise in the literary canon. It was an overwhelming success in the nineteenth century and was required reading for most educated Europeans. However, it was not taught in the United States for most of the twentieth Century (Showalter 1981). The feminist movement and feminist critics have been successful in restoring *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "to a degree of literary grace" (Lauter 1983, p. xx).

Cather and Stowe are examples that show that the literary canon is not a fixed entity. Inclusion at one point does not ensure permanent representation. Therefore, the recommended lists must be closely monitored by marginalized groups, such as women, who want their point of view to be included and remain in the literary canon.

Mary Kathleen Simon conducted a study in 1991 concerning the factors which influence the inclusion of women's writings into the American literature curriculum. She specifically looked at the attitudes of both male and female chairs of four-year colleges and universities in the United States. The results of the survey revealed that both male and female chairs have generally positive attitudes towards integrating women's writing into their American literature curricula (Simon 1991, p. 116-117) However, the mean score indicated that the practice of teaching women's writing lags behind attitudes towards teaching women's writing (p. 117). The mean score measuring the extent to which literature written by women is being taught in each chair's institution is lower than the score which measures attitudes toward teaching women's literature (p. 118). Also,

Simon found that female chairs believe it is more important to incorporate women's writings into American literature courses than do the male chairs (1991).

Simon also drew further conclusions concerning gender and attitudes. Critics of canon revision have suggested that the great books and ideas are being "trashed" (Coughlin 1989, p. A-1). It was also reported by Gilbert in 1985 that many individuals in academe reacted with either "indifference" or "outright hostility" to feminist concerns (p.37). But the results of Simon's test shows otherwise. The responses indicate that the chairs generally believe that standards are not being jeopardized by including women's writing in American literature courses (p. 117). However, the idea that both points of view exist in the literature indicates that the issue of inclusion of American women authors in the canon is still a matter for concern.

In 1995, Lynn Silipigni Connaway conducted an exploratory study examining the inclusion of women authors in the three editions of *Books for College Libraries*. Her study was not related to a specific group or timeframe. All women authors included in *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Tradition in English* were eligible for selection in her sample of fifty women authors. She found that forty-two of the fifty women authors in her sample are included in at least one edition of *BCL* (p. 75). This total seems significant at 84%. But the percentages were lower when considering each edition separately. The total number of women authors in *BCL1* was 56%, *BCL2* shows 60%, and *BCL3* shows 76%. An increase occurs in each subsequent edition.

Lynn Silipigni Connaway also studied the demographics of both the 42 women who were included in *BCL* and the eight women authors who were not. She considered factors such as color, feminism, sexual preference, and unconventional political or social beliefs (p. 76). She concludes from her examination of these demographics that the majority of female authors included in *BCL* are white, American Caucasians (p.77). Also, women who "reflect unconventional perspectives or ideas in their works or lifestyles" are likely to be excluded in *BCL* (p. 77). "Unconventional" would encompass

nonconformist views on "society or controversial social problems and subjects" (77). This would include the factors of color, feminism, sexual preference, and unconventional political or social beliefs mentioned above. However, six women of color were included in *BCL*. Three Jewish women were included. Also included were lesbians, bisexuals, and three women authors who lived with a female companion in a union comparable to marriage (p. 76). Therefore, the conclusion that exclusion is based on these demographics does not seem solid. Exclusion may best be explained by the fact that these women authors have not been accepted into the literary canon.

Silipigni Connaway's study also concludes that inclusion in *BCL* "may be influenced by the publishers' control of the titles published, access to their public, trade publishers relationships with the learned elite, and the marketing strategies employed by the trade publishers" (p. 81). She bases this conclusion on the fact that 64% of the publishers included in *BCL* are trade publishers, which indicates that the titles published by these trade publishers are more likely to be included in *BCL* than those published by small or university presses (81). She also suggests this may determine the titles reviewed in library journals (p. 81). This implies that the large mainstream publishers are very powerful. This study supports the perspective that the "literary canon is a reflection of the values favored by a learned elite" (p. 81). It further suggests that the "learned elite may include authors, editors, and contributors of core collections or lists, publishing companies, and review sources" (p.81). Women must remain visible within this dominant group in order to remain in the foreground of literary study.

A study by Delaney-Lehman states that the literary canon upheld by institutions of higher education has not adequately represented works by women or minority groups (1994, p.121). She suggests that standardized bibliographies under-represent gender and cultural diversity. Delaney-Lehman acknowledges that *BCL3* is regarded as a core collection bibliography and this fact "implies a sort of hierarchy in which the described core constitutes the 'must have' books while everything else is relegated to a position of

lesser significance" (p. 122). The excluded works tend to be marginalized or invisible. There are implications of inferiority if a bibliography emphasizes the works of white males to the virtual exclusion of those by women and minorities (p. 122).

This study of the diversity component of *BCL3* was an offshoot of a broader collection assessment project at Lake Superior State University in 1992-93. As part of the study, the library conducted an assessment of the general education collection to determine if it met the university goal of supporting the general education curriculum appropriately. Emphasis on basic knowledge in the general education program parallels the focus of *BCL3* and makes it an excellent standard for general education collection assessment (p. 123). But Delaney-Lehman questioned whether *BCL3* adequately represented women and minorities (p. 123).

For the study sample, Delaney-Lehman chose works appropriate for use in the general education program. The women's bibliography was comprised of two separate lists. One was a list of 395 appropriate titles and the other a list of 190 notable women and women authors (p. 123). The findings of her study showed that 59.2% of the titles were not included in *BCL3* and 34.2% of the notable women and women authors were not found in *BCL3* (p. 123-124). A 41% inclusion rate appears low. The author wonders why more women's works were not included (p. 123). These findings suggest the need for further monitoring of the inclusion of women in *BCL3*.

Delaney-Lehman discusses the point that works excluded from the literary canon lack visibility and are not readily found without considerable effort (p. 124). Thus they tend to be excluded from mainstream review sources and publishers catalogs, which are sources most often used in compiling bibliographies. This situation perpetuates this invisibility (p. 124). This point reinforces Silipigni Connaway's suggestion concerning the learned elite's control over the literary canon and who the learned elite actually are.

Delaney-Lehman states that libraries are responsible for their own collections and should not rely solely on standardized book lists for collection development (p. 124). But

she also acknowledges the fact that libraries are heavily influenced by mainstream sources (p. 124). She emphasizes that only "[w]hen works by women are legitimized by inclusion in standard bibliographies they will appear in library collections with a greater frequency" (p. 124).

Objectives

1. To compile a list of 100 American women literary authors who published between 1620 and 1929. This timeframe enables the study to begin by documenting the author's inclusion in Shaw's recommended list.

2. To document the inclusion of the 100 American women literary authors in Charles B. Shaw's *A List of Books for College Libraries* (1930) and its supplement published in 1940.

3. To document the inclusion of the 100 American women literary authors in the three editions of *Books for College Libraries*.

4. To document the number of titles attributed to each American women literary author who is included in the above recommended lists.

5. To identify, compare, analyze, and explain the differences in the inclusion of American women literary authors among the different editions of the recommended lists.

6. To identify, compare, analyze, and explain the difference between the inclusion of American women literary authors in Shaw's *List of Books for College Libraries* and its supplement and the third edition of *Books for College Libraries*.

7. To discuss the difference between the inclusion of American women literary authors in Shaw's list and the subsequent recommended lists from an historical aspect concerning the issue of being a women author.

8. To identify, analyze, and explain the inclusion of American women literary authors of color.

9. To assess and analyze the representativeness of American women literary authors in the third edition of *Books for College Libraries* and determine its implication.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following definitions apply:

American-	Those who were either born in the United States or have established residency in this country. This includes slaves born in the U.S. or brought here in captivity.
Canon-	A work of literature which has achieved a recognized position in literary history for its superior quality.
Core bibliography-	A list of titles which is suggested for purchase by the academic libraries.
Feminism-	A set of beliefs, values, and attitudes centered on the principle that women should have rights that are equal to those of men.
Literary-	Relating to literature or to writers of literature.
Literature-	Writings in prose or verse that are considered as having permanent value, excellent form, and great emotional effect. The works are considered to have critical value.
Recommended list-	See core bibliography
Women of color-	Women whose ethnic origin is black slave, Native American, African American, or Mexican American.
Women's Studies-	An interdisciplinary field of study which began in the early 1970's and involves the intellectual exploration of the experience and point of view of women.

Methodology

This exploratory study will examine the inclusion of 100 American women literary authors in core recommended lists. The sample will be obtained from *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Tradition in English* by Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar and *American Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide from Colonial Times to the Present* by Langdon Lynne Faust.

Lynn Silipigni Connaway used *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Tradition in English* (*NALW*) exclusively to generate her study sample. She indicates that the *NALW* is considered an important canon of women authors in the field of literature (74). The anthology contains the literature that English-speaking women have produced between the fourteenth century and when the anthology was published in 1985. A comment on the book jacket by Joyce Carol Oates states that the "women writers, some little known, some famous, [were] all chosen with admirable literary judgment." The Preface indicates that the *NALW* is designed to serve as a "core-curriculum" text for the many courses in literature by women that have been developing in the decade before the books was published in 1985. It carries on the tradition of a "course in a book" pioneered by other Norton Anthologies (Gilbert and Gubar 1985, p. xxvii). The importance of the *NALW* is also noted in reviews. Reviews in *Library Journal* and *Booklist* indicate that *NALW* is a landmark in feminism as well as a significant work in the study of literature to be considered a staple in undergraduate English classes (Mitchell 1986 and Booklist 1985).

The biographical entries in the *NALW* were examined to discern the American women authors from those who are British subjects. It was also noted if the American woman author is a woman of color. The publishing timeframe has also been determined by examining the entries. The women authors considered for selection in the sample are

the ones meeting the criteria of being an American and publishing between 1620 and 1929. This timeframe will enable the study to begin by documenting the author's inclusion in Shaw's 1930 list. Thus, the study will generate data that will invite discussion concerning the historical aspect of being a women author in America. The biographical entries were examined twice in order to assure accuracy. There are 40 American women authors represented in the *NALW* that meet the criteria for the study. All 40 women authors will be included in the sample.

American Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide for Colonial Times to the Present (*AWW*) was examined to generate an additional 60 American women literary authors for the study sample. *AWW* is a two-volume abridgement of the original four-volume set. It includes works by American women who produced fiction, nonfiction, children's stories, inspirational literature, scholarly works, journalism, and temperance and suffrage propaganda. Analysis of each biography was needed to determine the authors who qualified for inclusion in the study.

Each entry was examined individually. Inclusion in the *AWW* automatically qualified all the authors as being women and American. The publishing timeframe was determined by looking at the list of the author's major works that followed each biography. The nature of the author's writing was more difficult to discern. Each biography was read and a list of potential candidates was made. The list was checked against the list from the *NALW*. Women authors who were also included in *NALW* were eliminated from the *AWW* list. The biographies of the remaining potential authors were reexamined and checked against biographies listed in *Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature*. *Benet* claims to be a comprehensive, in-depth encyclopedia which includes North and South American writers. Writers are defined as being novelists, poets, playwrights, writers of nonfiction, essayists, critics, and journalists. Not all women authors from *AWW* were included in *Benet*, but the vast majority were available

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for examination. The biography of *AWW* was examined exclusively if the author was not listed in *Benet*.

The nature of this study dictates that the American women authors included in the sample should be those whose works make them eligible to be taught in an undergraduate college literature course. Potential candidates were considered for inclusion in the study sample if they were identified as a novelist, a poet, a playwright, or a short-story writer. They were excluded from the potential pool of candidates if they were identified by Benet as writing exclusively in the following manners: letters and correspondence, political/social oriented works, historian, journalist/newspaper correspondent children's books/juvenile fiction, pamphleteer, anthropologist, editor, dime novelist, textbook writer, or travel writer. Even though these works are literary and the genres and authors may be included in the recommended lists under other categories, it is unlikely that they would be included in the English category pertinent to this particular study.

Also, a candidate was excluded from the pool if the total number of works she published was three or less. The number three was chosen arbitrarily. It is thought that publishing a minimal number of works minimizes an author's chance of being recognized and accepted into the literary canon. However, it is acknowledged that quantity and quality of literary works are not directly related.

Ultimately, a pool of 98 potential candidates for the study sample was generated from *American Women Writers*. Every third author in the alphabetical list was eliminated until 38 authors were excluded from the potential sample. This procedure left 60 authors eligible for the sample. These 60 authors were added to the 40 generated from *NALW*. This brought the total number of American women literary authors in the sample to 100. It was also noted which authors are women of color.

The names of the 40 women author's from *NALW* were alphabetized and an alphabetized list was prepared. An alphabetized list was typed for the 60 women authors from *AWW*. Alphabetizing the names made them easier to locate in the recommended

lists and reduced the chances of error. Five columns were headed to accommodate Shaw's *A List of Books for College Libraries*, its supplement, and each of the three editions of *Books for College Libraries*. The separate lists allowed data to be collected concerning the inclusion of authors in the *NALW*. Both lists will be combined for analysis.

Each author listed was checked for inclusion in the English section of each of the recommended lists. The space was marked "Yes" if the author is included in the list and "No" if she was not. If the author was included, a slash and a numerical notation indicated the number of titles attributed to that particular author.

Findings

This study measures the adequacy of inclusion on a numerical scale based on those used for grading by most academic institutions. Adequacy of inclusion is based on the following numerical scale: 90-100% is defined as superior inclusion; 80-89% is adequate and is consider equivalent to mastery level; 70-79% is considered below adequate inclusion; 60-69% is considered far below adequate inclusion; 59% or lower is considered inadequate. The use of a grade scale based on 100% is reasonable for measuring and analyzing the study sample of 100 women authors.

Table 1a presents the number and percentage of women authors included in *NALW* and in the recommended lists. The percentage of authors represented in Shaw & its supplement is 50%. At 52%, the percentage of authors represented in *BCL1* is only a 2% increase from Shaw. Table 1a further indicates that this 2% increase is the result of the inclusion of only 1 additional author. Further, the status of only a few authors changes from one recommended list to the other. Shaw and its supplement and *BCL1* includes basically the same women authors. This indicates that there was an

insignificant increase in the inclusion of American women literary authors in the 27 years between the publication of Shaw's supplement and *BCL1*.

There is an increase of *NALW* authors with each subsequent edition of *Books for College Libraries*. *BCL2* represented 63% of the authors in the sample. *BCL3* represented 78% of the authors. The percentage of authors represented in *BCL2* is a 11 percent increase from *BCL1*. There is a 15% increase in *NALW* authors represented in *BCL3* from *BCL2*.

This study's percentages representing the inclusion of American women literary authors from the *NALW* are similar to the results of the 1995 study conducted by Lynn Silipigni Connaway. Silipigni Connaway selected a sample of fifty women authors from *NALW*. Silipigni Connaway found that forty-two of the fifty women authors in her sample are included in a least one edition of *BCL*. This constitutes 84%. This study found that thirty-two of the forty women authors from the *NALW* sample are included in at least one recommended list. This constitutes 80%. These totals seem significant, but the percentages are lower when considering each edition separately.

The total number of women authors found in *BCL1* in Silipigni Connaway's study was 56% compared to 52% in this study, 60% in *BCL2* compared to 63%, and 76% in *BCL3* compared to 78%. The percentages of the results are approximate even though the scope of the sample differed. Both studies show that an increase occurs in each subsequent edition of *BCL*.

The number of authors from the total sample included in the recommended lists is presented in Table 1b. Although there is an increase in the number of authors represented in each list, the percentage of inclusion decreases considerably in comparison to the sample of *NALW* authors presented in Table 1a. Shaw and its supplement includes 32% of the authors from the entire sample. *BCL1*, *BCL2*, and *BCL3* includes 36%, 38%, and 44% respectively.

Sixty women authors included in the total sample were generated from *American Women Writers*. Thirty-five of the sixty women authors were not included in any of the recommended lists. This constitutes a 58% exclusion rate for the *AWW* sample. The sample of women writers selected from *AWW* are considered to be authors whose works make them eligible to be taught in an undergraduate college literature course. However, their exclusion from the recommended lists makes it more difficult for these women authors to be incorporated into the college curricula. Table 1c presents the number and percentages of women authors included in *AWW* and the recommended list.

Table 1a
Number and Percentages of the 40 Authors included in *NALW* Compared to the Recommended Lists

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw & Supplement	20	50	40
BCL1	21	52	40
BCL2	25	63	40
BCL3	31	78	40

Table 1b
Number of Authors from the Total Sample included in the Recommended Lists

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw & Supplement	32	32	100
BCL1	36	36	100
BCL2	38	38	100
BCL3	44	44	100

Table 1c
Number and Percentages of the 60 Authors included in *AWW*
Compared to the Recommended Lists

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw & Supplement	12	20	60
BCL1	15	25	60
BCL2	13	22	60
BCL3	13	22	60

This study indicates that the most significant increase occurs between Shaw and its supplement and *BCL3*. However, Tables 2a and 2b indicate that although there is an increase in the number and percentage of women authors, these numbers are not substantial when considering there is 48 year time span between Shaw's supplement and *BCL3*. Suffrage, feminism, and civil rights should have influenced the literary canon and the inclusion of women to a higher degree.

Table 2a shows that number of authors from *NALW* increased from 20 in Shaw and it's supplement to 31 in *BCL3*. Only 9 of the 40 women authors in the *NALW* sample were not included in *BCL3*. Four of the 11 women added to the recommended list are women of color. *BCL3* was the first time for inclusion in any list for 3 of the 4 authors of color.

The percentage of *NALW* authors rose from 50% in Shaw to 78% in *BCL3*. This is a notable increase of 28%. The 78% inclusion rate in *BCL3* can be considered almost mastery level when appraising the inclusion rate on the 100, 90, 80, 70 percent grade scale. In line with this grading scale, 80% is considered masters level.

The numbers and percentages are not as impressive when analyzing the entire sample. As shown in Table 2b, the number of authors from the entire sample of 100 authors increased from 32 in Shaw and it's supplement to 44 in *BCL3*. Eleven of the 12 women authors are from the *NALW* sample. The *AWW* sample is responsible for the addition of one author.

The authors included are not consistent from list to list. Four authors from the *AWW* sample are included in Shaw but not in *BCL3*. Five *AWW* authors included in *BCL3* are not included in Shaw. This shows that the literary canon is not a fixed entity. Inclusion at one point does not ensure permanent representation. This point is pertinent to many women authors who were decanonized at one time or another. Only 22 of the 32 women authors from the entire sample that are included in Shaw and its supplement are consistently included in all of the recommended lists. This constitutes 69% of the sample. This indicates that 31% of the women authors initially included in Shaw and it's supplement have been decanonized at some point. Table 2b also presents the percentage of authors from the entire sample included in Shaw and it's supplement and *BCL3*. Shaw and it's supplement included 32% of the entire sample while *BCL3* included 44%. A 12% increase within a 48 year period seems trivial. The 44% inclusion of women authors in *BCL3* can be considered a failure when evaluating the inclusion rate on a 90, 80, 70 percent grade scale.

Table 2a
Comparison of the Number and Percentage of Authors from *NALW* included in *Shaw* and its Supplement and *BCL3*

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw & Supplement	20	50	40
BCL3	31	78	40

Table 2b
Comparison of the Number and Percentage of Authors from the Entire Sample included in Shaw and its Supplement and *BCL3*

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw and Supplement	32	32	100
BCL3	44	44	100

Table 3a presents the number and percentages of women of color included in *NALW* and the recommended lists. Eight out of the nine women of color included in the entire sample are represented in the *NALW* sample. Only one woman of color from the *NALW* sample is included in Shaw and it's supplement. As shown in Table 3b, the inclusion of only one women of color is also true regarding the entire sample. The inclusion of women of color constitutes 2.5% of the *NALW* sample and only 1% of the entire sample. The same percentages hold for the inclusion of women of color in *BCL2*. As Table 3a and 3b indicate, *BCL1* included 0 women of color from *NALW* and the entire sample.

The highest rate of inclusion occurs in *BCL3* as indicated in Table 3a and Table 3b. Five women of color make up 12.5% of the *NALW* sample of 40 authors. Six women of color constitute 6% of the entire sample of 100 authors. Table 3c indicates that the six women of color included in *BCL3* represent 67% of the 9 women of color who are included in the entire sample. Three of the 9 women of color are not included in any recommended list. This constitutes an exclusion rate of 33% for women of color in the entire sample. Inclusion rates are extremely low or nonexistent in Shaw and it's supplement, *BCL1*, and *BCL2*. However, the substantial increase in the inclusion of women of color in *BCL3* is positive and encouraging.

This study is not able to determine the factors that finally influenced the acceptance of these women of color into the literary canon. Zora Neale Hurston is the only woman of color included in Shaw and it's supplement. However, Hurston was decanonized and her name did not reappear until its inclusion in *BCL3*. Phillis Wheatley is the only other woman of color that is included in a recommended list before *BCL3* in 1988. This suggests that, historically, women of color have been excluded from recommended lists.

Table 3a
Number and Percentages of Women of Color included in *NALW* and the Recommended Lists

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw & Supplement	1	2.5	40
BCL1	0	0	40
BCL2	1	2.5	40
BCL3	5	12.5	40

Table 3b
Number and Percentage of Women of Color compared to the Entire Sample who were included in the Recommended Lists

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw & Supplement	1	1	100
BCL1	0	0	100
BCL2	1	1	100
BCL3	6	6	100

Table 3c
Number and Percentage of Women of Color from the Entire Sample who were included in the Recommended Lists

List	Number of Authors	%	N
Shaw & Supplement	1	11	9
BCL1	0	0	9
BCL2	1	11	9
BCL3	6	67	9

The number of titles by the 100 American women literary authors in the sample that appear in the recommended lists are documented in this study. As Table 4 indicates, there is a total of 528 titles included in all of the recommended lists. The women authors in the *NALW* sample are responsible for 427 of the 528 titles.

As the table indicates, the largest number of titles appear in *BCL1*. The *NALW* sample includes 165 titles and the *AWW* sample includes 26 titles. The total of 191 titles for *BCL1* is considerably greater than the totals of the other recommended lists. There is only a slight difference among the number of titles in Shaw, *BCL2*, and *BCL3*.

Fourteen authors have the greatest number of titles included in the recommended lists. A prime number of titles is considered to be 5 titles or more in a single list. The number 5 is an arbitrary number. There is a significant decline in the number of titles for many of these authors from *BCL1* to *BCL2*. For instance, Willa Cather drops from 23 titles in *BCL1* to 2 titles in *BCL2*. Gertrude Stein drops from 25 titles in *BCL1* to 10 titles in *BCL2*. There are also significant decreases for Edna St. Vincent Millay, Marianne Moore, and Edith Wharton. Other women authors experience slighter declines in titles. The loss of titles was not recovered in *BCL3*. This slash in the titles can probably be attributed to the fact that the number of entries in *BCL2* was reduce to 38,651 from the list of 53,400 titles in *BCL1*.

Table 4 indicates only 13 titles for women of color out of the 528 total titles. Zora Neale Hurston is the only women of color represented in Shaw and it's supplement. Hurston is represented with only 1 title in the supplement. Phillis Wheatly is represented with only 1 title in *BCL2*. Of the 11 titles attributed to women of color in *BCL3*, 5 belong to Zora Neale Hurston and 2 belong to Phillis Wheatly. Linda Brent, Jesse Redmond Fauset, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, and Harriet Adams Wilson are only represented in *BCL3* and with only 1 title each.

The results of this study complement the findings of the study conducted by Delaney-Lehman in 1994. Delaney-Lehman questioned whether *BCL3* adequately represented women and minorities. Delaney-Lehman suggests that standardized bibliographies under-represent gender and cultural diversity. Delaney-Lehman acknowledges that *BCL3* is regarded as a core collection bibliography and this fact implies a sort of hierarchy of "must have" books (p. 122). Everything else is relegated to a position of lesser significance. The excluded works tend to be marginalized or invisible. Delaney-Lehman discusses the point that works excluded from the literary canon lack visibility and are not readily found without considerable effort. Her findings suggests the need for further monitoring of the inclusion of women authors and their works in *BCL3*.

Table 4
Number of Titles included in each Recommended List

Source	Shaw/Supp	BCL1	BCL2	BCL3	Total
NALW	79	165	89	94	427
AWW	22	26	28	25	101
Entire Sample	*101*	*191*	*117*	*119*	*528*
Women of Color	1	0	1	11	13

Summation of the Hypotheses

H1 Women have historically been excluded from recommended lists. Found to be true. The low percentages of inclusion in the *NALW* sample and the total sample indicate that women have historically been excluded from recommended lists. Shaw and its supplement indicate a 50% inclusion rate for the *NALW* sample and a 32% inclusion rate for the total sample. The extremely low rate of increase in the 27 year period between Shaw's supplement and *BCL1* also supports H1.

H2 Historically, women of color are more likely to be excluded from recommended lists. Found to be true. This study found that only 2 women of color are represented in any recommended list before the publication of *BCL3* in 1988. In addition, the 2 women are represented by only 1 title each.

H3 There is an increase in the inclusion of American women literary authors with each subsequent edition of recommended lists. Found to be true. However, the increase is slight from one list to the next. Thirty-two women authors from the total sample of 100 are included in Shaw and it's supplement. *BCL1* indicates an increase of 4 authors. Only 2 authors are added between *BCL1* in 1967 and *BCL2* in 1975. Only 6 additional authors are included by 1988 and the publication of *BCL3*.

H4 There is a substantial difference in the inclusion of American women literary authors in Shaw's recommended list and the third edition of *Books for College Libraries*. Found to be false. There is not a substantial difference in the inclusion of American women authors between the two recommended lists. The *NALW* sample shows an inclusion number of 20 out of 40 authors in Shaw. *BCL3* includes 31 of the 40 authors

from the *NALW* sample. The increase for the *NALW* sample seems adequate, but not substantial. The numbers from the entire sample indicate that the 48 year period between Shaw and it's supplement and *BCL3* provides the addition of only 12 American women literary authors.

H5 The third edition of *Books for College Libraries* does not adequately represent works by American women literary authors. Found to be false in relation to the *NALW* sample. Found to be true in relation to the entire sample. Found to be true in relation to number of titles. The third edition of *Books for College Libraries* adequately represents women in the *NALW* sample, but not in the entire sample. The number of titles in *BCL3* does not adequately represent works by American women literary authors. The *NALW* sample shows that 78% of the 40 authors in the sample are represented in *BCL3*. The 78% inclusion rate is almost mastery level. However, the inclusion rate for the entire sample of 100 authors is only 44%. There is a significant decline in the number of titles from *BCL1* to *BCL2*. *BCL1* includes 191 titles which drops to 117 titles in *BCL2*. The loss of titles is not recovered in *BCL3*, which includes 119 titles. These excluded works tend to be marginalized or invisible. There is a need for further monitoring of the inclusion of women and their works in *BCL3*.

Conclusion and Recommendation for Further Study

An examination of the findings listed above suggests that many prolific American women literary authors have been and remain excluded from or in the margins of the literary canon. The exclusion of authors from the canon based on gender and/or color implies that women have historically been considered outsiders by the "learned elite" who determine the authors and titles for inclusion in recommended lists.

The conclusions drawn from this study fall into two areas: the historical inclusion of American women literary authors in core recommended lists and the adequacy of women's inclusion in *BCL3*, the current core bibliography used by academic libraries.

The low percentages representing women literary authors inclusion indicate that women have been historically disenfranchised from the literary canon. Also, the small rate of increase with each subsequent recommended list suggests that women have continued to be discriminated against in the struggle for acceptance into the literary canon.

In one important respect, the results of this study are disappointing. It was hypothesized that, historically, women of color are more likely to be excluded from recommended lists. However, it is disheartening to find that women of color are almost entirely excluded until *BCL3* in 1988. Still, the number of women of color and the number of titles included in *BCL3* is grossly inadequate. The vast majority of female authors included in recommended lists are Caucasians. There are implications that the issue of color is a more serious point than that of gender when it comes to being accepted into the literary canon.

It would be interesting to further explore the inclusion of women of color and their titles included in the English section of each edition of *BCL*. A less restricted sample than that used in this study would include more women of color. A sample of female authors of color and their titles compared to a sample of male authors of color and their titles included in each edition of *BCL* would also be beneficial in examining the issues of color and gender. There are currently many bibliographies devoted to minorities that can be used to evaluate the inclusion of authors of color and their titles in *BCL*.

The results of this study show that the percentage of inclusion of women literary authors is adequate when considering just the *NALW* sample. This is notable because *NALW* is an important canon in the field of women's studies and women's literature. The

inclusion of 78% of the *NALW* authors suggests that more major female authors are being accepted into the canon. But the inclusion of only 44% of the entire sample also suggests that many widely read and prolific women writers are still being excluded from or in the margins of the literary canon.

This study also concludes that the number of titles attributed to the women authors who are included in *BCL3* is not adequate. *Books for College Libraries* is currently an important canon of the academic library field. *BCL* has a major influence on collection development and evaluation of academic libraries as well as influencing the undergraduate curriculum. The works that are excluded from the list tend to lack visibility. They are more likely to be absent from library shelves or over-looked for incorporation into the undergraduate college curriculum.

Further study of the actual use of *BCL3* by academic librarians for collection development and evaluation could determine the current significance of the core list. Also, further study could focus on how influential *BCL3* actually is in developing the undergraduate college curriculum. Do English professors use *BCL3* to determine what authors and works they will teach? Do English professors dismiss teaching authors who are not represented in *BCL3*? To what extent do the holdings of an academic library influence the development of an English Department's curriculum? These further studies may help to assess the influence of *Books for College Libraries* and determine how critical it is to continue monitoring it's contents.

Producing a core list, such as *Books for College Libraries*, is a monumental endeavor. *BCL* indicates that the initial selections were made for the University of California's New Campuses program with the assistance of college teachers, librarians, and other advisors. It is not specifically indicated what group or groups constitute the other advisors. Silipigni Connaway suggests that this group within this "learned elite may include authors, editors, and contributors of core collections or lists, publishing

companies, and review sources" (p. 81). There are implication concerning the power of the large mainstream publishers (p. 81).

The combination of college teachers and librarians is a logical choice to aid in selecting English materials for inclusion in *Books for College Libraries*. Cooperation and communication between national organizations of teachers of college literature and academic librarians can help to assure that inclusion in *BCL* is based on literary merit. The inclusion of works by women and other marginalized groups can be intelligently monitored by committees of college teachers and librarians who are dedicated to academic excellence. The support of these committees by ALA, who publishes *BCL*, would enhance their influence concerning the works selected for inclusion.

Selections librarians in an academic library need to communicate and to work closely with the faculty of their English Department. Tight budgets make it imperative that intelligent decisions are made concerning the purchase of monographs. Communication between librarians and faculty can help assure that the books being purchased support the curriculum and supply the undergraduate student body with the necessary material for term papers and outside reading. Academic librarians can compare the preferences and requests of the faculty to *BCL* and offer input to the selection committees.

Selections librarians need to keep abreast of the current literature in the English journals read by the faculty as well as the library literature. Keeping current aids in communication with faculty as well as helping to make intelligent decisions. Also, awareness of the titles published by university and small presses is useful in the selection of quality academic works. Advocating the works published by these presses and recommending the titles to the selection committees can help to check the power and influence of the large mainstream publishers. Authors and their works may be selected on the basis of scholarship and literary merit rather than profits and prestige among the

literary elite. Works by women literary authors can be scrutinized and recommended for incorporation into the college curriculum and inclusion in *BCL*.

Core recommended lists can aid in selection, but librarians must use caution and avoid selecting blindly from them. *Books for College Libraries* was originally intended to be used as a guide for book selection rather than a final authority.

This study concurs with many of the previous researchers who examined the issue of women and the literary canon. It is extremely important to continue to monitor the inclusion of women authors in *BCL*. Women must be adequately represented in the recommended lists used most by academic librarians if they are to remain contenders in the arena of literary canon. Otherwise, as Paula Rothenberg notes, the successes realized by women so far may be in danger of being overturned by academic conservatives that advocate a return to the "classical" ideal and a more traditional curriculum (Hatton, p. 259). The conservative idea of what constitutes "the best" works of literature (Girouz & Kay 1989) would tend to exclude women. It would be a reinstatement of the partriarchal authority which historically excluded important authors on the basis of gender and race. Careful monitoring helps to assure that women will not move backwards in their struggle for acceptance in the literary canon.

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